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Christmas Shopping Guide



You Will Enjoy this Christmas Fantasia

BY BETTY HERRINGTON,
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CHARACTERS.

WRIEL—Young fairy.
DEPHOTHYNE—Mischievous elf.
FUSIL—Gray-haired gnome.
SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS.
JEAN AND ADELE—Children, brother and sister.

SCENE.

Cheerful, old-fashioned room. A fire-place is at one end, having stockings hanging over the mantelpiece. A spinning wheel stands in one corner and an open spinet at the left. Outside door is at right and the kitchen door at the left.

As the curtain rises the outside door blows open and snow flies in. The three fairies dance merrily onto the stage.

WRIEL: Well! (perches on top of spinet and breathlessly dusts the snow from his wings.) Dephothyne, I told you that winter weather wouldn't be very comfortable. NOW what do you intend to do?

DEPH: (Dancing gaily over to the wicker bird cage and making faces at the bird.) I'm not cold, and this seems the very place for an adventure. If you think that I shall stay sleepily under a rock, (glancing at Fusil), simply because the birds aren't singing and I haven't any vine to swing on, you're entirely mistaken. I wish to see what these mortals do.

WRIEL: (Playing the spinet with his toes.) I wish I were a mortal. Don't you hate to think of sleeping half the year?

DEPH: I envy them sometimes, for they have souls and it is said that they live forever, while we only cease to be.

FUSIL: (Sharply.) You needn't envy them! A soul is a great nuisance. It has to be educated, and understood and saved. This night is called Christmas Eve. The festival is rather like our Corn Carnival, except that they enjoy themselves in a very peculiar manner. It makes the father look worried and nervous, over-works the mother, while the children quarrel continually.

DEPH: Don't worry, though. There'll be fun enough! (He stops teasing the bird and, using a broom for a partner, begins to dance about the center of the stage.)

FUSIL: (Who has been contemplating the fire gloomily.) I'm sure I don't know what to say. I know I'll have chills from this weather. Wriël, come down from that spinet! Dephothyne, if you don't come home at once I shall tell your mother about the time you stole the frozen dewdrops she intended to present to the queen. Wriël! Dephothyne! Listen to me! This is no place for you. Come home with me at once. (Wriël and Deph. leap toward him and then as if suddenly changing their minds, jump to the top of the mantelpiece and sit hugging their knees and grinning like a pair of gargoyles.)

(Enter maid and children, carrying decorated Christmas tree.)

MAID: We'll put the tree in this corner. Adele bring me that broom and close the door. Just look at the snow! (While she sweeps up the snow which has blown in, Wriël slips around the tree and opens the door again. He repeats this performance and she finally places a chair against the door.)

Come, now, children; it is bedtime. Oh! I'm tired.

CHILDREN—No, no. We don't want to go to bed. Please let us stay up just ten minutes longer.

MAID: It's bedtime. Come, or Santa Claus won't decorate the tree. Come. (Takes one with each hand and draws them through the door.)

(Fusil slips under the spinet and D. and W. hide in the branches of the tree. Clock strikes twelve somewhere in the distance and the chair in front of the door is pushed aside.)

(Enter the Spirit of Christmas—a tired, worried-looking man who carries a pack of toys which is nearly empty, in one hand and an expense book in the other.)

SPIRIT: Ho! Hum! I wish the children would forget about Christmas for a few years. This thing of leaving a gift for a squalling, spoiled, cantankerous youngster in every one of twenty-five billions of homes every year is becoming monotonous.

(Hangs tinsel on the tree, the fairies immediately throwing it down again.)

SPIRIT: Thunderation! (Glances up and spies fairies.) Come on down and help me. I'm tired and in a hurry.)

(Fairies come down.) What are you doing

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TO SANTA CLAUS

By James Whitcomb Riley.

Most tangible of all the gods that be,
O Santa Claus—our own since infancy!
As first we scampered to thee—now, as
then,
Take us as children to thy heart again.

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

Be wholly good to us, just as of old;
As a pleased father, let thine arms en-
fold
Us, homed within the haven of thy love
And all the cheer and wholesomeness
thereof.

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

Thou lone reality, when O, so long
Life's unrealities have wrought us
wrong:
Ambition hath allured us, fame like-
wise,
And all that promised honor in men's
eyes.

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

Throughout the world's evasions, wiles
and shifts,
Thou only biddest stable as thy gifts:—
A grateful king re-ruleth from thy lap,
Crowned with a little soldier-cap:

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

A mighty general—a nation's pride—
Thou givest again a rocking-horse to
ride,
And wildly glad he gloweth as the grim
Old jurist with the drum thou givest
him:

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

The sulptor's chisel, at thy mirth's com-
mand,
Is as a whistle in his boyish hand;
The painter's model fadeth utterly,
And there thou standest, and he paint-
eth thee:—

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

Most like a winter pippin, sound and
fine
And tingling-red that ripe old face of
thine,
Set in thy frosty beard of cheek and
chin
As midst the snows the thaws of spring
set in.

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

Ho! Santa Claus—our own since in,
fancy—
Most tangible of all the gods that be!—
As first we scampered to thee—now, as
then,
Take us as children to thy heart again.

—Copyright by James Whitcomb Riley.

How Xmas Came to the Beautiful Lady

BY KATHRYN KELLER

Student at Northern Arizona Normal School

Tommy loved the smiling man from the very first minute he saw him standing in the front hall of the Home. He was so kind looking, and had such a cheery smile on his face as he watched Tommy, with several other boys, trudging back upstairs from their breakfast.

Later, when Miss Fanny came into the play-room and called to Tommy, his little heart thumped wildly. He walked down the steps beside her, and saw the big man waiting for them in the office, with Mr. White.

"Tommy, this is Mr. Manning. He wants to tell you something," Miss Fanny said. Then she hurried out, as Mr. Manning and Tommy were gravely shaking hands.

Miss Fanny hurried back to the play-room, where she found Miss Burns, the primary teacher. "Oh, Ella, dear, I do hope those people take Tommy. That poor child is so unhappy here!"

"Oh, so do I! He seems so different from the other children. He needs more than mere kindness; what he needs is love!"

Downstairs, the smiling man lifted the little boy up on his lap. "I'm looking for a little boy to take home with me. Would you like to do that?"

Tommy turned and looked questioningly at him. "Oh—could I—really? Have you got a real Christmas tree, and a mother?"

"Yes, dear. You see, I had a little boy just about your size. Be he is—gone, and—well, we want you to take his place."

Tommy's wide grey eyes filled with tears, and his chin trembled. "Could I go—with you now?"

The smiling man laughed. "Not today, chappie. But you be ready tomorrow, and I'll come for you at ten o'clock."

Miss Fanny came back for him then. The man said, "Goodbye, Tommy; be ready in the morning, won't you?" Tommy smiled, and wiped the tears from his cheeks with a little faded sleeve.

He clenched Miss Fanny's hand tightly, as they went back to the play-room. "Oh, I'm going away," he whispered. "He said he would come tomorrow. He has a real Christmas tree, and—why, Miss Fanny; you aren't crying, are you? Don't you want me to go?"

Miss Fanny dropped down beside him, and put both arms around him. "Yes, dear child. I do want you to go—that's why I'm crying. I'm so glad for you."

"I'll come and see you most every day. Honest, I will."

The next morning, Tommy was in a state of nervous excitement. He insisted on putting on his little grey coat and cap long before ten o'clock. When at last he heard the big, cheery voice of the smiling man, he rushed wildly to the stairs. "Here I am. I'm all ready," he cried.

The ride through the busy streets was wonderful to Tommy. He had never been in an automobile before, and every moment brought some new delight. At last the car stopped in front of a large house, and the smiling man said: "Well, here we are, chappie!"

"Where is Mrs. Manning?" he asked of the maid who met them at the door. "Please ask her to come down to the library."

He led Tommy into a large room, where a fire burned brightly. Tommy had never seen a room like this before.

"Do you think you will like this better than the Home?" asked the man.

"Oh, yes!" cried Tommy.

Just then the Beautiful Lady came in. Tommy gasped when he saw her. She had a wealth of soft brown hair, and big, sad eyes.

"What is it, dear?" She smiled at her husband who crossed the room and threw his arm around her.

"I have a Christmas surprise for you, Helen. Come here, Tommy." Tommy came shyly forward. "This is, Tommy. He has come to live with us."

Tommy stood waiting for her to speak, but was surprised to see her grow suddenly pale and cover her face with her hands.

"Oh, Charles! How could you?" she cried, sobbing, and then ran from the room, leaving Tommy and the Smiling Man gazing after her. But the man was not smiling now. He turned slowly and dropped into a chair.

Tommy looked at him silently for a moment, then went to him. "Why did she act

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